

Citizen AIRMAN

Vol. 60 No. 5
October 2008
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Official Magazine of the
Air Force Reserve



Reserve rescue specialists are performing
a new mission in Afghanistan, but they are still...

Saving Lives

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Teens reach
new heights
at leadership
summit
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Volunteer or Mobilized?

What effect
does status have
on benefits?

page 20



From the Top

By Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Troy J. McIntosh
Command Chief Master Sergeant,
Air Force Reserve Command

Multi-directional communication is vital to everything we do

For us to share in a vision of the future, understand how we will get there and work toward the same goals, we need to communicate. It is vital to everything we do.

That does not mean just you listening to me; it means me listening to you, as well. And it means dialogue between all of us — horizontally, vertically and every way in between. I will use each issue of *Citizen Airman* to let you know the issues and challenges I am facing and to get the dialogue started.

In the August issue of this magazine, I stated, "I believe your voluntary participation is encouraged when you are able to serve in the way you desire. To this end, I will advocate for initiatives and legislation that allow you to serve more flexibly in peace and war with minimum impact to your civilian career and employer."

In order for me to fulfill my part of this bargain, I must know whether our current array of policies, benefits, incentives and protections are enabling you to serve the way you desire.

For that to happen, it is essential that you are aware of these policies, benefits, incentives and protections affecting your service, and that you provide me with feedback as to whether these are meeting your needs.

As for the first aspect, making you aware, this issue of *Citizen Airman* includes an article on Page 20 that explains the differences in an array of policies and benefits as they apply to those who voluntarily deploy and those who are mobilized. I encourage you to read and understand it, and to get more information if necessary.

To the second end, I ask that all of you — those working the line and leadership alike — provide feedback up the chain of command.

Tell your superiors whether these policies, benefits, incentives and protections are working for you.

In addition, in the weeks and months to come, many of you will be invited to participate in surveys and focus groups concerning these policies and benefits. I encourage you to participate in these as you are asked.

Your feelings on these and all matters are important to me.

The better I know them, the better able I am to advocate on your behalf, the better you will be able to serve the way you desire and the better the Air Force Reserve will be able to meet the requirements of our combatant commanders around the world through your volunteerism. So, read on. ... and communicate. ★

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FOR YOU.

The capacity to give a little extra

For generations, Americans have stepped up as volunteers in every capacity. Whether it's helping a friend move or helping a stranger through a natural disaster, we have always found the capacity to give a little extra.

Volunteering for military service is no different. Each day, I'm reminded of 67,000 examples of Air Force blue volunteer spirit in the form of our Citizen Airmen. These examples include 8,000 new members, the result of Air Force Reserve Command meeting its annual recruiting goal.

Those people didn't just walk through the door, find a uniform and report for duty. Our recruiting team — the best in the Department of Defense — discovered every one of those people. From San Diego to Bangor, Maine, the AFRC recruiting team made a concerted effort to recruit the best people in the right jobs at the right time.

Our recruiters see challenges on the horizon. The recruiting goal for fiscal year 2009, which begins Oct. 1, will increase by 900 people. The task of meeting a higher goal is made even more difficult by the fact that the pool of people we select our applicants from is growing smaller.

One area of emphasis for our recruiters right now is air reserve technicians. Eight recruiters are assisting with bringing in new ARTs. In that area, the command is staffed at just above 82 percent. We need to be at more than 100 percent. The ART recruiting team, in conjunction with civilian personnel offices throughout the command, is identifying applicants and ensuring they are shepherded to the right program.

The greatest challenge our recruiters face right now is work-

ing with commanders at all levels to get the right people hired for the mission. Naturally, commanders want people with experience; people with prior military service who can come in and hit the ground running right away. That's not always possible.

Chief Master Sgt. Mike Bibby, the recruiting service enlisted manager, offers this: "Sometimes, we're our own worst enemy. We keep getting told to staff units with qualified applicants only. That places a huge burden on the recruiting team."

The number of people with previous military experience, either in the regular Air Force or another service, is dwindling. We need to be able to work through obstacles like these to strengthen our Reserve force from top to bottom. The recruiting service and its team of professionals is part of the solution. Another key part of the solution to meeting our manning needs is unit leaders, who need to look hard at their hiring practices.

All of this circles back to our generation's desire to volunteer. As an unrivaled wingman, the Air Force Reserve has never been poised at a more important time. I'm confident that we'll be up for the challenge of priority No. 1: winning the war on terrorism. But we need people — the right people in the right mission — to do that.

There's a reason why the recruiting team has kept AFRC at or above goal for eight consecutive years. Now, as we move forward, let's find the capacity to ensure that level of success continues and that we can staff our units from top to bottom. As always, it's truly an honor for me to represent you, our most valuable asset! ★

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FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.

Bombs away

Staff Sgt. Sean Minnick (left) and Senior Airman David Garrison of the 926th Group load a missile onto an F-16 Fighting Falcon July 24 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. The 926th is an Air Force Reserve unit under the 10th Air Force, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas. The group is located at Nellis AFB as an associate unit to the Air Force Warfare Center. Sergeant Minnick is a 926th Group Det. 2 F-16 weapons loader team chief, and Airman Garrison is a 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron F-16 weapons load crew member. (Senior Airman Larry E. Reid Jr.)

Citizen AIRMAN

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On the front cover: (Top) Aerospace medical evacuation technician Tech. Sgt. Christopher Yarbrough tends to a patient during a medical mission in Afghanistan. See story, Page 16. (Bottom left) Shanna Harrison tries her hand at rock climbing during Air Force Reserve Command's first Teen Leadership Summit in Dahlonaga, Ga. The story is on Page 28. (Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin) (Bottom right) Members of the 908th Airlift Wing, Maxwell AFB, Ala., board a KC-10 aircraft from McGuire AFB, N.J., bound for Southwest Asia. Reservists who deploy will find that most of their benefits are the same whether they volunteer or are mobilized. See story, Page 20.

Doing the low-crawl

710th Medical Squadron Reservists Tech. Sgt. Kristine Fleming (left), operating room technician, and Master Sgt. Jean Tait, NCOIC of medical logistics, lead their team out of the low-crawl portion of the litter-carry obstacle course during a field training exercise at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., as the last step to reaching their waiting "patient." After treating the patient and placing him on the stretcher, the team would have to retrace their route, including repeating the low-crawl, to carry him to safety. The 710th is an Air Force Reserve Command squadron based at Offutt and is a geographically separated unit assigned to the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo. (Tech. Sgt. John Vertreese)



Round the Reserve

A brief look at what's happening throughout Air Force Reserve Command

Climate survey seeks Reservists' opinions, perceptions

Unit Reservists and individual mobilization augmentees have an opportunity to give their opinions and perceptions on a wide range of issues by participating in the 2008 Air Force Climate Survey.

By seeking feedback from members of the Reserve, Air National Guard and regular Air Force, as well as civilian employees, the Air Force is trying to provide leaders at all levels with information they can use to improve their organizations and better accomplish the mission.

The survey, titled "Speak Today, Shape Tomorrow," began Oct. 1 and runs through Nov. 26 and is accessible only through the Air Force Portal. Individual e-mail invitations, which included a personalized link to the survey, were sent to everyone's military e-mail address. These links are not transferrable.

In the past, survey participation rates have averaged between 50 percent and 60 percent. This year the Air Force's goal is to increase that rate to at least 75 percent.

"As members of the Air Force Reserve Command, you have a great opportunity to influence how we do business now and in the future," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander. "In 2005, we experienced an overwhelming command-wide response to the survey. This high participation rate sent a clear message that our people are committed to improving our Air Force."

"By participating in the survey, you will provide critical information to leaders in your organization — officer, enlist-

ed and civilian alike — to make our Air Force a better place to work," said Chief Master Sgt. Troy J. McIntosh, AFRC command chief master sergeant.

"Since the survey software protects your identity, I encourage you to be honest and straightforward in your responses," the chief said. "The survey data will be as good as you make it. This is your opportunity to stand up and be counted."

One way to increase the participation rate is to make the survey easier and quicker to complete. The 2005 survey took anywhere from 45 to 60 minutes to complete. This year's survey is designed to take only about 15 to 20 minutes.

The survey team at the Air Force Manpower Agency has been working on an enhanced capabilities survey tool, producing a system that will assist the analysts in making reports available to Air Force leaders months earlier than before, said Col. Daniel Badger, AFMA commander. As a result, leaders will be able to respond and make necessary adjustment actions much sooner.

Prior to this year's survey, the Air Force gave AFRC an opportunity to submit a list of 10 questions designed specifically for Reservists. The questions will gather information related to civilian employers, Reservists' families, deployments, retention, the Reserve retirement system, and the relationship between Reservists and members of the regular Air Force. ★

(Staff reports)

Total Force Team Examines Travel Voucher Process

In response to reports of delays in processing travel vouchers, Air Force Reserve Command served as host for a Total Force team of financial experts from around the Air Force Aug. 11-14 to find ways to improve the process.

The team, under the direction of Richard Gustafson, deputy assistant secretary for financial operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., used the Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century process to identify inefficiencies and ways to eliminate waste and needless duplication.

In addition to delays, some Airmen must pay their government travel card debt with personal funds. The Air Force is aware of these and other concerns, and its top financial officer gets briefings at least twice a week about the voucher process.

"This situation is unacceptable to not only front-line Airmen but also to Air Force leaders as well," Mr. Gustafson said.

"I can't tell you how important the work you're doing here is," said Maj. Gen. Allan R. Poulin, AFRC vice commander, during the team's out-brief Aug. 14. "In the Reserve Command, our Airmen are on volunteer status. They leave civilian jobs to serve our nation, and we owe it to them to pay them in an accurate and timely manner."

The team developed proposals to address more than 60 areas for possible improvement. Topping the list was the amount of rework needed throughout the process to ensure vouchers flow smoothly through the Air Force Finance Services Center at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D.

The current system requires people to scan and attach receipts to the voucher.

"Everything at Ellsworth is a scanned document," Mr. Gustafson said. "We no

longer have the capability to make changes. Those days are gone. You have to pay more attention to what you're putting on your voucher than ever before."

To help travelers, the Air Force will develop a tri-fold pamphlet detailing tips for effectively completing a travel voucher along with a standardized Air Force-wide checklist to ensure a high-quality output the first time.

The experts also found differences in the ways some financial service offices are adapting their processes to the vouchers being routed to a centralized location. This, combined with staffing and systems issues, has led to non-standard practices affecting processing time. The team plans to establish and communicate standard procedures for the financial service offices and technicians at the central processing center.

Until the travel voucher process is more refined and process improvements are implemented, Airmen are encouraged to

engage their chain of command if they encounter problems.

"If you're not paid in 15 days, I'd be over at the financial services office asking, 'Where's my money?'" Mr. Gustafson said. "If you don't get a satisfactory answer, that is what a chain of command is for. Your leadership can't do anything about something they don't know about."

As a long-term solution to improving services provided to Airmen, the Air Force will develop a standardized self-populating electronic voucher program that functions much like popular income tax software.

Mr. Gustafson said the team identified three main points for him to take back to the Pentagon. Those points are the need to communicate more effectively the transformation of the voucher process to Airmen, the need to pay more attention to the unique needs of the reserve component, and the idea that, over time, the new process will work and is going to be better for all Airmen. (Tech. Sgt. Drew Nystrom, AFRC public affairs)

Citizen Airmen Gain Avenue to Joint Credit

Procedures are now in place to allow Air Force Reservists to self-nominate for joint experience credit, Air Reserve Personnel Center officials said.

ARPC received the necessary reserve component implementation guidance March 28 from the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. This interim guidance to the Joint Qualification System outlines the joint credit criteria for Citizen Airmen serving in joint assignments less than full time.

"JQS is important because it allows the Defense Department to better incorporate an officer's joint experiences and qualifications into assignment, promotion and development decisions," said Maj. Eric Levesque, chief of ARPC's Force Development Division.

Citizen Airmen can self-nominate online at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/jmis/JQSindex.jsp>.

JQS, which went into effect Oct. 1, provides a structure to recognize the expeditionary and inherently joint nature of military operations in the 21st century.

Previously, only officers who were assigned to a joint duty assignment

Pope's Puns



CARTOON BY MASTER SGT. W.C. POPE, WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE, MASS.

could become joint qualified, but this changed with the National Defense Authorization Act of 2007.

To progress through the four levels of joint qualification, officers must complete the required joint education and fulfill the criteria of either the standard path or the experience path.

The standard path requires serving in a joint duty assignment list position. Officers serving part time must serve at least 66 days a year in a JDAL position. Colonels and below must serve a cumulative total of six years in JDAL positions. General officers must serve a cumulative total of four years in general officer or above JDAL positions.

The experience path means service in a non-JDAL position for which an officer may request the experience be considered for award of joint experience points. It allows point accumulation through a combination of shorter joint assignments, exercises and training.

"This change makes reserve component participation more feasible," Major Levesque said. "It's the way Citizen Airmen typically serve: a few months here, a few days there. It all adds up to great experience."

The experience-based system awards points in tracking the progression through successive qualification levels, while accounting for the intensity, envi-

ronment, duration and frequency of each joint activity.

Joint experience must include duties related to the achievement of unified action by multiple military forces in the areas of national military strategy, strategic and contingency planning, command and control of operations under unified command, national security planning with other departments or agencies, and combined operations with military forces of allied nations.

Typically within two weeks of a Reserve officer self-nominating for joint credit, ARPC officials review the application and collect supporting documentation. They present qualifying packages to quarterly joint panels.

JQS includes a grandfather clause permitting retroactive point credit dating back to Oct. 1, 1986, for reserve component officers and Sept. 11, 2001, for active-duty officers. (Senior Master Sgt. Kelly Mazezka, ARPC public affairs)

Evaluations Release Highlights vPC-GR Evolution

When the new online evaluations process for coordinating performance reports launched in July, it quickly became a shining example of the capabilities of the virtual Personnel Center - Guard and Reserve.

Since it launched, nearly 1,400 Reservists and Guardsmen have begun coordinating the online performance reports, and the first was successfully loaded into the Automatic Records Management System July 24.

"This is a great example of the vPC-GR's capability to let our Airmen submit their forms and have a systematic visibility on their status throughout the chain of command," said Dave Gallop, Air Reserve Personnel Center's Directorate of Personnel Data Systems director.

The earlier version of the process, which only was available to Reservists, would let performance reports be uploaded into vPC-GR, but there wasn't the online coordination or visibility.

"Commanders could have reports in coordination without knowing their status," said Lt. Col. Doug Ottinger, ARPC's Directorate of Future Operations director. "Now, Guard and Reserve commanders can know exactly where all their reports are by looking on vPC-GR."

At the genesis of its Web-based services in December 2005, ARPC allowed customers to request a copy of their 20-year and mortgage letters and print them from their own computer. Also, officers could submit a letter to the promotion board or request promotion board counseling.

This happened before the real push by Air Force officials to meet a secretary of defense mandate for the military to catch up and use more technology to free up limited personnel resources. In the personnel world, the Air Force was required to transform the way it delivered personnel services.

"We wanted to create a system where any of our customers could log in and request any service we provide at their convenience from anywhere in the world," said Craig Carter, a software engineer in DPD. "Then, we could get back to them with a response within a reasonable timeframe."

ARPC began filling online requests for documents after switching to new software in October 2004, Mr. Carter said.

"The 20-year and mortgage letters process was our first process that didn't require anyone to do anything on the back end. The computer did all the work for us," he said.

A vast majority of the requests, like



Web sites provide wealth of Tricare info

With many Reservists being activated and drilling Reservists in Selected Reserve positions now having access to Tricare benefits through Tricare Reserve Select, the question often comes up: What is the best and simplest way to learn about Tricare?

The recently redesigned Tricare Web site is a very good resource and provides a user-friendly environment to navigate the complexities of Tricare. The site asks visitors to answer three questions and then creates a profile for them, gathering applicable information that is instantly accessible with the click of a computer mouse. Just enter the beneficiary section at <http://www.tricare.mil/>.

However, if you prefer a more traditional Web approach to learn the basics, I've assembled on the AFRC/SGS Web site (<https://wwwmil.sg.afrc.af.mil/SGS/tricare.htm>) a few direct links that will get you started. This Web site is accessible only from a military computer.

These links range from the basics of Tricare to maximum allowable charges for procedures and services, briefings, Tricare guides, and direct Web page access to the Tricare contractors.

As always, please feel free to e-mail or call with any questions or guidance you may need at Alexander.Alex@afrc.af.mil, DSN 497-0270. ★

(Lt. Col. Alexander Alex is the command's health benefits manager. "From the Tricare Advisor" is a feature that will run periodically in Citizen Airman magazine.)

duty history changes and address updates, need a person to handle the issue before it can be closed. This is referred as a Tier 1 transaction and is normally completed by customer service counselors who work in the Reserve Personnel Contact Center. If special attention is needed, it is referred to Tier 2. "These letters are examples of Tier 0 service at its finest," Colonel Ottinger said. "The customer knows what he wants, and the computer automatically gives it to him."

While not all the processes can fall into Tier 0, the six Air Force civilian developers still are working to make services easier for customers.

In the past couple years, ARPC developers launched online processes to apply for retirement and nominate Airmen for decorations.

One of the most significant changes to

the system came in December 2007 with the launch of the vPC-GR Dashboard. This tool gave people a centralized place to see anything that was being processed in the system, Colonel Ottinger said. Specifically, it gave leaders and people in key positions within the organization the ability to see the status of transactions within their area of responsibility.

"With where we are around the world in many different and varied areas, giving our members access is crucial. ... so they know and have a comfortable feeling that their records are right," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., Air Force Reserve Command commander. "Personnel services delivery transformation ... is helping us keep pace in line with the ops tempo of today's world and how we deploy around the world."

So far, the vPC-GR has processed tens of thousands of transactions since its first

official capability, duty history updates for the Reserve, was launched in March 2006.

While most of the items the developers have planned are enhancements to existing applications, there are still a couple Air National Guard-specific applications in the works like requests to separate.

"As developers, we have total control over vPC-GR applications and our case management system," Mr. Carter said. "If an urgent change is needed based on customer feedback, mandated changes or to fix a problem, we have the local talent and flexibility to make these changes quickly."

As the military transitions to the Defense Integrated Human Resource System, Mr. Carter said he doesn't see his role disappearing.

"Very few programs meet all of their customers' needs when they first hit the street," he said. "We'll be prepared to provide development support for customer processes during the transition to DIMHRS and migration to the new consolidated case management system." (Master Sgt. J.C. Woodring, ARPC public affairs)

Air Force Beefs Up RED HORSE Capabilities

Air Force Reserve Command is converting some positions and moving others to give the Air Force a larger RED HORSE force.

The Air Force needs more rapid engineer deployable heavy operational repair squadron engineer Airmen to support the Global War on Terror. To meet that need, AFRC is creating 446 RED HORSE authorizations.

"The combatant commanders requested more RED HORSE capability," said Lt. Col. Joe Ballard, chief of the civil engineers' Readiness Division at Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. "A lot of the work going on in Iraq and Afghanistan is reconstruction and force beddown; of course, it is in a war environment."

This month AFRC started converting Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force squadrons to RED HORSE units at Charleston AFB, S.C., and Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C. Prior to the conversion, Reservists received training to meet RED HORSE requirements.



Lt. Col. Diane Flores, an international health specialist from the 433rd Medical Group at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, performs triage on a family Aug. 1 during a medical mission in Mollepata, Peru.

Medics overcome challenges to provide care during training exercise in Peru

By Capt. David Tomiyama

With only half their medical team and less than three days to see patients, Air Force Reservists from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, still managed to care for more than 2,000 people during a medical training exercise in Peru.

A 19-person team from Air Force Reserve Command's 433rd Medical Group treated patients in the Ayacucho region Aug. 1-7 as part of New Horizons-Peru 2008. New Horizons is a long-term, U.S. Southern Command-sponsored program to bring humanitarian assistance to Latin and Caribbean nations.

The team included doctors, a dentist, an optometrist, dental technicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacy technicians and an administrator. Members provided general medical care and diagnoses; dentistry, optometry and pharmaceutical services; and public health education in Mollepata, Carmen Alto and Quinoa over the course of six days.

Although the Reservists are no strangers to medical training exercises in Guatemala, Honduras, Belize and the Dominican Republic, they were not originally scheduled to be a part of this year's New Horizons exercise. They learned in June that they would be

going to Peru to replace Soldiers who had to pull out of the exercise because of a last-minute deployment. The Reservists not only had to scramble to meet the tight schedule, but they had to do so without their entire team.

"It's been a challenge because if you plan for a certain number of people and days and then they're cut, you have to improvise," said Lt. Col. Diana Flores, lead planner and international health specialist. "This unit, with only half its manning, is doing very well."

The short-handed medical team saw 2,373 patients in six days.

"The 433rd MDG team amazed me with the number of patients they saw despite only having a fraction of their team," said Maj. Matt Joganich, task force commander.

Despite the challenges, the Reservists gained invaluable training, Colonel Flores said.

"New Horizons put the team in a contingency, deployment-type situation, living out of tents, sleeping on cots and sleeping bags," she said. Team members practiced "field medicine, using their basic raw skills as providers to take care of patients." ★

(Captain Tomiyama was assigned to Task Force New Horizons public affairs)

Reservists displaced by base realignment and closure actions will have an opportunity to join the new units.

In addition, the Reserve will move its 556th RED HORSE Squadron at Lackland AFB, Texas, to Hurlburt Field, Fla., where it will associate with the 823rd RHS, a regular Air Force unit.

RED HORSE units deploy rapid-response civil engineering forces anywhere in the world. They are able to operate independently from other units in remote, high-threat, bare-base locations.

With their heavy equipment, they can build and repair facilities and infrastructure when requirements exceed normal base civil engineer capabilities. They can also carve out airstrips to launch and recover aircraft in remote areas.

Colonel Ballard said the Air Force picked Charleston and Seymour Johnson for the conversion because the bases are near major ports and have excellent recruiting and combat readiness histories.

Moving the 556th RHS to Florida is in keeping with Total Force Integration initiatives.

"The optimum situation is to place our units at a location where an active-duty

squadron is already located," said Clyde Wilkins of the civil engineer's Plans and Initiatives Branch at HQ AFRC.

In another TFI initiative, the Reserve's 555th RHS at Nellis AFB, Nev., will formally associate with the regular Air Force's 820th RHS at Nellis.

Mr. Wilkins said associating regular Air Force and Reserve units, an approach Air Force flying units began using 40 years ago, is an effective way to enhance a unit's capabilities.

The arrangement at Nellis will be a classic association, Mr. Wilkins said. That means the regular Air Force will share its equipment with the Reserve unit.

The Reserve's 307th RHS will stay at Barksdale AFB, La. It will remain available to augment the 554th RHS at Andersen Air Base, Guam, in case of contingency operations, Colonel Ballard said.

Reservists in the new RED HORSE units will not associate with active-duty RED HORSE squadrons. Instead, they will associate with Airmen in the active-duty Prime BEEF civil engineer units at their respective bases, Mr. Wilkins said.

Colonel Ballard said that through these various associations, the Air Force expects to improve readiness and efficiency by sharing equipment, facilities

and resources that will, in turn, get Airmen trained and keep them proficient with fewer resources.

AFRC officials said they realize moving a unit and reorganizing two others affects Citizen Airmen.

"The good news is, just as in the BRAC situations affecting bases Air Force-wide, the opportunity to stay with those units is there," Colonel Ballard said. "There will be opportunities at Charleston and Seymour Johnson."

He said manpower and personnel people in the command's clearinghouse continue working to help displaced Reservists find jobs. (Staff Sgt. Drew Nystrom, AFRC public affairs)

Solar-powered Golf Cart Test Looks Promising

Civil engineers at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., are testing a solar-powered electric golf cart that could, over time, create savings through reduced utility bills and longer battery life.

"We're the first unit to try it out, and we're pleased with it so far," said Gerald Haas, a pollution prevention management specialist in the 452nd Civil Engineer

Squadron. "We just have to make sure that we park it in the sun. So far we've only had to charge the battery twice."

With reduced utility bills and increased battery life, a solar-powered cart could save the Air Force \$235 annually compared to a plug-in cart, according to cost estimates released by Cruise Cars Inc., the cart's manufacturer. For March ARB people who use electric golf carts regularly, just extending the battery life is a big plus.

"The other cart kept dying right and left, and the batteries only last about a year," said Paul Pitman, 452nd CES air program manager. "These batteries can last for three-plus years, so you're saving money that way, too."

So far, March only has one solar-powered cart, but more can be purchased through base contracting. (Senior Airman David K. Flaherty, 452nd AMW public affairs)

Enlisted People Bestow Order of the Sword

The enlisted people of Air Force Reserve Command will induct the 15th member into the command's Order of the Sword during a ceremony in Orlando, Fla., Oct. 24.

Col. Francis M. Mungavin, commander of the Air Force Reserve Recruiting Service, was nominated for the honor July 31. Chief Master Sgt. Troy McIntosh, AFRC command chief master sergeant, extended the invitation to Colonel Mungavin during a surprise nomination ceremony at the command's headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander, and Maj. Gen. Allan Poulin, AFRC vice commander, joined about 200 enlisted members at the nomination ceremony.

Colonel Mungavin said the nomination and ceremony caught him completely by surprise.

"I thought I'd be up here talking about recruiting," the colonel said. "I'm really at a loss for words."

The Order of the Sword recognizes individuals for significant contributions to the enlisted corps. The ceremonial presentation was adopted from the Royal Order of the Sword and passed to the United States during the Revolutionary War. However, it lay dormant until it was reinstituted in its current form in 1967.

Fourteen people, including one civilian, have received the Air Force Reserve's Order of the Sword. Colonel Mungavin is the second colonel to be inducted into the order. All of the other military people were general officers. (Air Force Reserve Command News Service) ★

It's Your Money

By Ralph Lunt

This could be my last column ...

If everything works out, that is. You see, I was flipping through the channels the other day when I saw this really well-groomed, older actor talking to some good-looking reporter about how people can make more money from home than they ever dreamed of. So, I got to thinking: Why not me?

Besides, I already have almost everything I need — a computer and an internet connection. The only thing I need to buy is their "guaranteed or your money back" system, which is only like a thousand dollars or something.

You should see all the ordinary people talking about how much money they make working from home. I mean, there were like, I don't know, almost a dozen people who the actor and reporter showed on TV! What a jerk I am for busting my tail these last 30 years. I'm such a knucklehead!

Well, not anymore! I'll let you in on my little secret. I'm gonna beat them at their own game!

You see, I did some research and found out that there are a whole lot of these guaranteed ways to make money from home, even while you sleep! Here's my plan: I'm going to buy all their secrets. I'll flip houses, do whatever it is that you do with cash flow notes, trade stocks like a pro and sell stuffed animals made on Pluto over the internet. Soon, I'll become the richest man in the world!

I know it sounds crazy, but no crazier than all those people who trash these programs on the internet. I mean, don't ordinary people have better things to do than post complaints about how these programs don't work, about how they were encouraged to max out their credit cards to buy these systems. Some of these non-actors even have the gall to call these programs scams. I mean, if these things didn't work, they wouldn't pay good-looking "reporters" and actors to convince us they did. Would they?

In a word, yes! Warriors, please be careful. There is no secret formula to financial freedom. And even if there was, I doubt anyone would share it. Thanksgiving blessings to America, our families and especially those lost or injured in our fight for freedom. ★

(Editor's note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice and information of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Lunt is a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm. He is also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve, serving as the reserve forces director for the Great Lakes region of the Civil Air Patrol adviser's program.)



HARD TO SAY GOODBYE -- Master Sgt. Tom Robinson, a maintenance scheduler with the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., comforts his 19-year-old daughter, Jasmine, before he heads off to Afghanistan Aug. 24 for a seven-month deployment. He was one of about 70 Reservists who deployed to work with Army medical personnel to pick up injured soldiers and civilians on the battlefield. The Reservists replaced other members of the wing who had been serving in Afghanistan since February.

CAPT. CATHERINE SNOW

The New GI Bill

Legislation means Reservists now qualify for same benefits as their active-duty counterparts

By Staff Sgt. Celena Wilson

In June 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill into law that changed what opportunities were available to veterans returning from World War II. The largest aspect of the GI Bill of Rights gave these men and women the chance to pursue their college education, a privilege then reserved for the rich.

Within three years, veterans accounted for 49 percent of college admissions. By 1956, 7.8 million out of 16 million veterans had taken advantage of the GI Bill of Rights education benefit. In 1984, U.S. Rep. Gillespie V. "Sonny" Montgomery from Mississippi led an effort in Congress to revamp the program, giving it a new name: the Montgomery GI Bill.

This past June, the program underwent another major update, which, among other things, included the re-establishment of a benefit from yesteryear.

Members will not only see an increase in their GI Bill payment, but they may now receive a yearly book and supply stipend of up to \$1,000, monetary assistance for a tutor and a monthly housing stipend — a benefit introduced more than 64 years ago.

The largest change Air Force Reservists will see between the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post-9/11 GI Bill is they can now qualify for the same benefits as people in the regular Air Force.

"The biggest benefit for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill the Reservists will see is the equality to their active-duty counterparts," said Julia Williamson, Air Force Reserve Command training specialist. "Before the change, Reservists would receive \$440.40 to \$880.80 (full-time) a month (for education benefits) under the Montgomery GI Bill, Chapter 1607, program. Now, depending on how much active-duty time a member has accumulated since Sept. 11, 2001, Reservists are eligible to receive the same amount of money as the active duty."

People in all categories — traditional Reservists, members of the active Guard and Reserve, individual mobilization augmentees and air reserve technicians — are able to take advantage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Even though the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Chapter 33, does not go into effect until Aug. 1, 2009, effective Aug. 1, 2008, members currently using their Montgomery GI Bill or Reserve Education Assistance Program benefits have already seen a change in their bank accounts when their monthly check arrived.

"Prior to the signing of the bill, members with more than 36 months active-duty service and attending school full time received 100 percent of the Montgomery GI Bill benefit equaling \$1,101 per month," she said."

When the bill was signed, that amount was increased to \$1,321. Members receiving the REAP full-time rates with at least two consecutive years of service or three or more aggre-

gate years saw an increase of \$880.80 to \$1,056.80."

For Reservists in any status, the only way to cash in more of the benefit is to accumulate time on active duty.

"As members volunteer or are mobilized, their time adds up, increasing their benefits accordingly," Ms. Williamson said. "For example, those who have 29 months active-duty time will be eligible for 80 percent. But if they are activated for seven months, they will be able to receive the full 100 percent since they will have 36 months on active duty. If the member is currently using the benefit when the additional months are accrued, the Veterans Administration should adjust it automatically, but the process is still being developed. The REAP program currently has similar protocols in place."

For those who were on active duty then transferred to the Reserve, their active-duty time does count toward their eligibility time.

The benefit of the additional money from the housing and book stipends will help out many members, but not everyone will receive them.

"One of the stipulations of using the Post-9/11 GI Bill is while on active duty, members cannot cash in the housing or book stipends," Ms. Williamson said. Also, the housing allowance is not payable for those training at less than half-time. "If Reservists are using their Post-9/11 GI Bill while in a Reserve status, they will be eligible to retain those stipends. But if they are activated, those stipends would be suspended until they are off active-duty orders."

Under the Montgomery GI Bill program, members were given 10 years from their last day on active duty to use their benefit. The new program gives members an extra five years to use their Chapter 33 benefit.

With this additional time, members might take advantage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill's newest addition — transferability to a spouse or dependent children. The details on this portion of the benefit still have to be worked out. Transferability includes new

stipulations and time restrictions:

- For eligibility to transfer the benefit to a spouse, the member has to complete six years active-duty time, accumulated from Sept. 11, 2001, with the promise of serving another four years active duty.

- For eligibility to transfer the benefit to a dependent child, the member has to complete 10 years active-duty time, accumulated from Sept. 11, 2001.

- The transfer has to take place while members are serving. If they separate or retire, they cannot transfer the benefit.

Some Reservists may have already used a portion of their Montgomery GI Bill, but that doesn't mean they can't benefit from the changes.

"Members can elect to move to the Chapter 33 program, even if they have used part of their benefit under another chapter," Ms. Williamson said. "Members are eligible for a total of 48 months of benefits between programs."

Another positive note under the Post-9/11 GI Bill is members will no longer have to invest \$1,200 into the program. And those who have invested all or some of this money will be eligible for a proportional refund. When members fulfill their obligation and use their Post-9/11 GI Bill, they will be eligible to receive a portion of their investment back. These figures are still being worked out by the VA.

Some of the biggest winners in the overhaul of the GI Bill program are those who declined the Montgomery GI Bill in the past. They will now be given the opportunity to elect into the program, without having to invest into it. This is also the same for members currently enrolled in the Veterans Educational Assistance Program.

As the command implements all of these changes, Ms. Williamson asks Reservists for one thing: patience.

"This is a huge overhaul to the system, and some kinks and questions during development of all the processes will surface," she said. "We are working toward having everything ironed out before the Aug. 1, 2009, start date."

"We ask members to visit their local base education office or the VA Web site at www.va.gov for more information and to keep up as new information becomes available. A lot more information will be heading their way, and we want to ensure they are fully informed." ★

Among the features of the new Post-9/11 GI Bill are an increase in tuition assistance payments, a yearly book and supply stipend, monetary assistance for a tutor, and a monthly housing stipend.



Reserve rescue specialists are performing
a new mission in Afghanistan, but they are still ...

Saving Lives



By Capt. Cathleen Snow

Air Force Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., and their sister unit at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., the 943rd Rescue Group, are used to saving servicemembers isolated in combat, like pilots shot down behind enemy lines. But they're currently racking up saves of a different kind in the skies over Afghanistan.

Since deploying in February as part of a 14-month tour performing the U.S. Army medical evacuation mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the Reservists had saved 211 people by the end of August, and that number is growing every day, according to Maj. Kevin Merrill, director of operations for the 305th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron in Afghanistan.

A "save" in this case refers to a situation where, without immediate medical evacuation, a person would lose his life, a limb or eyesight. In addition, wing Airmen recorded 146 assists or evacuations where life, limb or eyesight were not in immediate danger through the end of August.

The wing normally performs combat search and rescue missions during wartime but for the first time has been tasked by Air Combat Command to conduct air ambulance service, previously called an "in-lieu-of" mission, for the overstressed U.S. Army.

On a traditional combat search and rescue mission, an HH-60 combat rescue crew typically consists of two pilots, a flight engineer, a gunner and a two armed pararescuemen. While performing the medevac missions, the pararescuemen are replaced by an Army or

Air Force medic, who is trained differently.

Despite the different crew configuration, "we can adapt, and that's what we'll do," said 920th Rescue Wing Commander Col. Steven Kirkpatrick.

The rescue crews flying these missions have reported many harrowing flights where they saved injured Soldiers, international forces and Afghans. There have also been atypical missions, like the time they transported snake venom to save a little Afghani girl's life. Or when they evacuated a military working dog sprayed with shrapnel from a roadside bomb.

No matter how dangerous the mission, the flying is always tricky over the craggy Central-Asian nation. Afghanistan, which is slightly smaller than Texas, routinely records temperatures of more than 120 degrees during the summer and is home to the Hindu Kush



Aerospace medical evacuation technician Tech. Sgt. Christopher Yarbrough tends to a patient during a medevac mission in Afghanistan. (Inset photo) A pair of HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters approach a landing zone.

mountain range, which soars to more than 25,000 feet above sea level. The combination of extreme heat and high altitude means less air particles for a helicopter's rotors to push. Less push means less lift, making for difficult flying in any location but especially behind enemy lines.

So, how do pilots compensate? Power.

"It's all about power management," said Lt. Col. David Baysinger, commander of the 301st Rescue Squadron at Patrick. "Lack of power management results in two-thirds of helo accidents. And due to the terrain, there are a lot of places you can't land. Even if you do land, you still need enough power to take off."

The idea, of course, is to be the rescuer, not the rescuee — not always easy in one of the darkest places on Earth — literally. In most areas, Afghanistan is without the glow of city lights, streetlamps, billboards and traffic lights. That pervasive blackness, combined with vast clouds of sand whipped into the air by furious winds, results in truly dangerous flying conditions.

"Flying in violent dust storms on dark, moonless nights is

when your training really kicks in," Colonel Baysinger said. "You have to be prepared for a lot of different rescues."

To deal with all the challenges air crews face in conditions like this, there's just no substitute for experience. That's why the Reservists from the 920th Rescue Wing who were scheduled to replace the group already in Afghanistan spent two weeks in July performing high-altitude training at Davis-Monthan AFB.

"We need to get our folks training in an environment that emulates where they will be deployed," said Col. Jeffrey Macrander, 920th Operations Group commander.

The troops left Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., on a C-5 Galaxy that also carried two of the unit's HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters. While at Davis-Monthan, helicopter crews practiced working together to get the mission done over Arizona's mountains and desert.

Operating a helicopter is an interactive process involving a pilot and co-pilot to fly the machine and a flight engineer who is the power manager, making on-the-spot calculations depending on the ever-changing factors of altitude, temperature, wind and

air speed. The gunner is the fourth and final crewmember. A vital defensive position, the gunner is always scanning for danger, ready to pull the trigger if necessary.

No matter what's happening outside the helicopter, crews agree that the environment must remain calm inside the aircraft. Part of the Arizona training included lessons in crew resource management — how the crew interacts under stressful conditions and rapid mission planning and execution. The training is sure to come in handy once they reach their deployment destination.

In all, nearly 100 rescue Reservists from the 920th, including pilots, aircrews, intelligence officers and support personnel, will continue to deploy to Afghanistan during the length of the 14-month medevac mission. ★

(Captain Snow is the director of public affairs, 920th RQW, Patrick AFB, Fla.)

Aerial gunner Tech. Sgt. Joshua Donnelley and chaplain's assistant Master Sgt. Edwin Vos get ready to take off on a mission to deliver medical litters to the Combined Special Operations Task Force forward surgical team at Forward Operating Base Ripley in the Afghani province of Uruzgan. Sergeant Voss was going along to meet and conduct a Bible study with the service members serving at the forward base.



MASTER SGT. DEMETRIUS LESTER

Staff Sgt. Ernest Kunde, 305th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron HH-60G Pave Hawk crew chief, removes the dust cover off the gun of a helicopter before a recent mission in Afghanistan. Sergeant Kunde is deployed from the 920th Maintenance Squadron, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.

Maintainers make sure wing's Pave Hawk helicopters are always ready to roll

By Capt. Cathleen Snow and Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse

There's no doubt that the aircrews from the 920th Rescue Wing and the 943rd Rescue Group performing the medical evacuation mission for the Army in Afghanistan are facing some difficult flying conditions. Things aren't any easier for the maintenance crews taking care of the wing's HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters.

A high-operations tempo, scorching temperatures, and dusty and dirty conditions are putting the wing's maintainers to the ultimate test. ... and they're passing that test with flying colors.

Overall, the Air Force average for the percentage of a unit's aircraft ready to fly at any given time — known as the fully-mission capable rate — is 77 percent. From February, when they arrived in country, to the end of August, rescue Reservists have flown more than 730 missions totaling more than 650 hours. The fully mission capable rate for 920th Rescue Wing helicopters during that time was 100 percent.

"Every time they called us for a mission, we launched — 100 percent of the time," said Maj. Keith Bellhumeur, commander of the deployed maintainers.

In an effort to keep the perfect record intact, the wing maintainers scheduled to replace those already in Afghanistan recently spent two weeks at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., getting ready for the task at hand.

"The environment we're operating in, with all of the dirt and dust, just tears up the turbine blades and requires a more aggressive approach to maintenance," said Chief Master Sgt. Phillip Roe, 920th Maintenance Squadron superintendent. "By nature, helicopters are beasts. There are so many moving parts and so much wear and tear on the airframe."

Maintainers always have to think one step ahead, which often requires working through the night to keep a helicopter ready for the next day's flying schedule.

As a two-ship formation of Pave Hawks settled onto the Davis-Monthan flight line at midnight, the maintainers could clearly see why they were practicing brown-out landings in the desert. A thick coat of dust completely covered the aircraft.

Maintainers thoroughly washed the helicopters and pulled panels to get a look at "heavy-hitting" items like the power plant. They performed their duties with careful attention, knowing what will be at stake when they are tasked to take care of their Pave Hawks in Afghanistan. ... when every aircraft that takes off can mean a life saved. ★

(Captain Snow and Sergeant Flipse are assigned to the 920th RQW public affairs office.)

Volunteer or Mobilized?

Most benefits are the same for Reservists whether they volunteer or are mobilized; but there are a few exceptions

Since Operation Desert Storm, the Air Force has increasingly relied on Reserve and Guard forces to meet combatant commander requirements. Demand for forces dramatically increased after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

The Air Force initially met this demand primarily through partial mobilization of forces. Although Reserve and Guard forces are still being mobilized — particularly in stressed career fields like security forces, civil engineering and operations — the Air Force Reserve has subsequently strived to meet these requirements through volunteerism.

To accommodate this greater reliance on Reserve and Guard forces, Congress and the Department of Defense have revised law and policy, improving benefits in some cases and outlining accessibility to Reservists in others. The range and conditions of benefits — when they apply, when they don't — can be confusing: Do Reservists get a particular benefit when they meet a contingency requirement by volunteering as opposed to being mobilized?

For the most part, the answer to this question is yes. However, there are some cases where the benefits for volunteers as opposed to people who are mobilized are different.

As Reservists are only mobilized in support of contingencies, this article examines the applicability of benefits for volunteers only in the context of contingencies. Moreover, since mobilizations in almost all cases last longer than 30 days, this article doesn't address the applicability of benefits for volunteers in situations involving 30 days or less.

This article focuses on 30 benefits or categories of benefits available to Reservists and Guardsmen that include pay, allowances and leave, retirement, health care, legal protections, education, insurance, survivor benefits, privileges, and small business support.

Of the 30 benefits or categories of benefits reviewed, 25 are the same for both volunteers and people who are mobilized. Five are different, depending on whether a Reservist is placed on active-duty status by way of volunteerism or mobilization for greater than 30 days. These five are legal assistance, income

replacement, the 1095 rule, post-deployment/mobilization respite absence and follow-on mobilization. Following is a brief explanation of these five differences:

Legal assistance

Although legal assistance is available to Reservists and their dependents whenever on active-duty orders, mobilized Reservists are eligible for continued legal assistance after demobilization. This entitlement is available when mobilized for more than 30 days and provides legal assistance to Reservists and dependents after release from active duty, for not less than twice the length of active duty, subject to the availability of legal resources. *See 10 U.S.C. § 1044, as amended, Public Law 110-181, section 541; 122 Stat. 114.*

Income replacement

In order to qualify for income replacement of up to \$3,000 per month, a Reservist must be involuntarily mobilized (not on voluntary orders) for any full month after the date on which the member completes 547 continuous days of active duty under an involuntary mobilization order or completes 730 cumulative days of active duty under an involuntary mobilization order in the previous 1,826 days, or is involuntarily mobilized for a period of 180 days or more within 180 days of release from a period of 180 days or more of active duty.

This income replacement is only the difference between the member's average civilian income and the total military compensation, when the member's civilian pay was more. This entitlement is not applicable to federal employees and is set to expire at the end of the 2008 calendar year. *See 37 U.S.C. § 910, as amended, Public Law 110-181, section 604; 122 Stat. 145.*

The 1095 rule

Reservists may serve on active duty orders for 1,095 days (three years) of the previous 1,460 days (four years). If

Reservists serve in excess of this limitation, then they must be counted against active-duty or active Guard and Reserve end-strength limits, unless these Reservists serve on active duty under certain excluded categories.

Days spent on mobilization orders are excluded, as are days on annual tour, days spent as an AGR, duty performed before first entering the Selected Reserve and certain training tours. While the secretary of the Air Force may waive certain Reservists to count against active-duty or AGR end strength according to established criteria, waiver is not guaranteed.

These criteria, in order of priority, are members deployed to the area of responsibility; members directly supporting Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom or Noble Eagle; members supporting approved contingencies; members on operational support orders; and members backfilling for active-duty members who are forward deployed in support of OEF, OIF or ONE. In the past year, more than 2,200 Reservists applied for waiver, while more than 1,600 were approved. *See 10 U.S.C. § 115, as amended, Public Law 110-181, sections 403(h), 416(b), 417; 122 Stat. 87, 91, 92.*

Air Force Reservists from the 908th Airlift Wing board a KC-10 aircraft from McGuire AFB, N.J., bound for Southwest Asia to provide support for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Montgomery, Ala.-based 908th AW was the first C-130 unit in Air Force Reserve Command to deploy under a rotation system filled by volunteers. Reservists who deploy will find most of their benefits are the same whether they volunteer or they are mobilized. (Jeff Melvin)

PDMRA

Secretary of defense policy establishes the post-deployment/mobilization respite absence (PDMRA) benefit. Department of Defense and AFRC guidance further delineate the policy. Essentially, PDMRA provides for paid days off after extended time spent deployed (minimum of one cumulative year within the last 72 months).

When mobilized, all time is credited toward PDMRA, whether deployed in side or outside the continental United States. By contrast, for volunteers, the benefit applies only when serving in certain designated locations and only if the member is subsequently mobilized within the next 72 months. See *Secretary of Defense Memorandum, 19 Jan 2007; OSD/PR Policy Letter, 15 Mar 2007, as amended 18 Apr 2007 and 24 May 2007; and HQ AFRC/A1 Policy Letter, 21 Feb 2008.*

Follow-on mobilization

Another difference between volunteering and being mobilized that could affect most Reservists is a secondary or follow-on mobilization. Current policy strives to minimize the disruption to a member's commitments outside the military.

Accordingly, the secretary of defense has established a desired ratio of time Reservists spend mobilized to time not mobilized. This ratio is currently 1 to 5, which means that a Reservist who spends a period of time being mobilized should expect five times that period at home station, not being mobilized.

A member who volunteers does not establish a new dwell period at home station by virtue of volunteering for a contingency.

He or she can still be mobilized upon his or her return from voluntary duty, per the established ratio, based on his or her last mobilization.

It is also important to point out that this dwell rate is a planning objective and, as such, can be changed by the secretary of defense when the needs of the military require. See *Secretary of Defense Memorandum, 19 Jan 2007; OSD/PR Policy Letter, 15 Mar 2007, as amended 18 Apr 2007 and 24 May 2007; and HQ AFRC/A1 Policy Letter, 21 Feb 2008.*

Benefits: Same or Different?

Pay, Allowances, Leave and Accessibility

- Basic Pay
- Basic allowance for housing (BAH)
- Basic allowance for subsistence (BAS)
- Special and incentive pays
- Tax benefit for combat zone
- Family separation allowance (FSA)
- Hostile fire/imminent danger pay
- Hardship duty pay (HDP)
- Payment for unused leave (in support of contingency)
- Leave accrual
- Post-deployment reconstitution
- Income Replacement
- PDMRA
- Follow-on mobilization
- 1095 Rule

Retirement

- Reduced retirement pay age

Health Care

- Retirement or separation for physical disability
- Medical and dental benefits (in support of contingency)
- Transitional assistance medical program (TAMP)
- Employer-sponsored health care plan — COBRA

Legal Protections

- Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA)
 - Return to work
 - Employer pension benefit plans
 - Civilian employment retention
 - Assistance with a reemployment issue
- Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA)

Education

- GI Bill

Insurance

- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)
- Family SGLI

Survivor Benefits

- Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (with 20 years satisfactory service)

Privileges

- Base privileges (commissary, BX, MWR services)
- Space-A travel
- Legal Assistance

Small Business Support

- Military Reservist Economic Injury Loan Program

Summary

In order for the Air Force Reserve to continue fulfilling combatant commander requirements by way of volunteerism, while minimizing the disruptive effects of mobilization, it is imperative that Reservists have the facts.

The fact is a large number of benefits are the same, regardless of how the Reservist is placed on active duty. Where differences do exist, in most cases the benefits only become available after extensive time on mobilization orders or time spent in designated countries.

However, volunteerism may offer the Reservist greater flexibility and control since orders will be produced and amended (if necessary) locally. References are available to help clarify any misunderstandings about Reservist benefits.

Since benefits for Reservists are always subject to change, Reservists should keep abreast of the latest information available on the Web at <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra>. ★

(Information for this article was provided by the Air Force Reserve Directorate of Strategic Communications at the Pentagon.)

GOAL!

Reserve eclipses recruiting number for eighth straight year

For the eighth consecutive year, the Air Force Reserve met and eclipsed its annual recruiting goal.

Reserve recruiters across the country and around the world tallied the 8,000 mark at 12:38 p.m. EDT Aug. 28. The recruiting cycle coincides with the Department of Defense fiscal year, which runs from Oct. 1 of one year to Sept. 30 of the next.

The 8,000th recruit was Aaron Coggin of Birmingham, Ala. He leaves for basic training in January and will train to be a flight medical technician.

Staff Sgt. Philip Fogleman, a Reserve recruiter in Birmingham, not only earned the honor of bringing in the goal-meeting Airman, Sergeant Fogleman also met a vital personal and professional goal.

"It was exciting not just because it was 8,000, but because it was also my first recruit," he said. "I won't forget that one."

Meanwhile, Tech. Sgt. Frederick Transburg, the in-service recruiter at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, got recruit No. 8001. Sergeant Transburg understood the importance of exceeding the command goal.

"It's important that we see the recruiting service come together to make goal. We certainly did what was expected of us, and with No. 8001, we've done more," Sergeant Transburg said. "That's exciting for me. I look forward to next year."

Col. Francis M. Mungavin, commander of Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service, said once again his team proved itself best in Department of Defense.

"From the recruiters in the field to the support teams in the headquarters, everyone ensured we met goal ahead of schedule," Colonel Mungavin said. "Congratulations to a world-class team that has proven once again it is the best of the best."

Reserve recruiters reached the 8,000 goal more than a month before the deadline. On average, recruiters put in 24 Airmen every day.

Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander, said meeting the goal eight consecutive years was a great accomplishment.



"It's amazing what our Reserve recruiting team has done," General Stenner said. "To make their goal each year, for eight consecutive years, is an outstanding accomplishment and shows the dedication Reserve recruiters demonstrate on a daily basis."

With new Reserve missions and more manpower needed, General Stenner expects the challenge to continue to grow for Reserve recruiters.

"Our recruiters have shown they are ready to rise to the occasion and deliver the people," he said. "I am impressed every day by the perseverance and ingenuity of all our Reservists." ★

AIR FORCE RESERVE'S TOP CHEVRONS

The command's senior enlisted advisors and command chief master sergeants



CMSgt. Robert I. Boyle
1st Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
March 15, 1973 — March 14, 1975
Background: Aircraft Maintenance
Leadership Statement: "You have to satisfy the person in the mirror."



CMSgt. Olin B. Colwell
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
March 15, 1975 — Sept. 1, 1977
Background: Aircraft Maintenance, Flight Engineer
Leadership Statement: "Leaders must always follow the rules. ... displaying respect and adhering to strict ethics."



CMSgt. Jackie R. Farley
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
Oct. 14, 1977 — Oct. 10, 1979
Background: Supply Superintendent, First Sergeant
Leadership Statement: "Communications are important. We (the headquarters) need to have better communications with our field units and a better understanding of the issues they face."



CMSgt. Jack E. Roberts
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
Nov. 1, 1979 — Feb. 9, 1982
Background: Loadmaster
Leadership Statement: "Leadership doesn't begin and end at the main gate."



CMSgt. Henry J. Scott
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
Feb. 10, 1982 — May 27, 1986
Background: Personnel, First Sergeant
Leadership Statement: "Do not give up on anything, especially if you think it needs to be done for the Air Force's benefit."



CMSgt. Richard E. Russell
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
May 28, 1986 — July 5, 1988
Background: Loadmaster, Security Forces
Leadership Statement: "I subscribe to the one-time Army motto: Be All That You Can Be!"



CMSgt. Charles F. Joseph
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
July 6, 1988 — Aug. 30, 1991
Background: Air Traffic and Control; Loadmaster, First Sergeant
Leadership Statement: "Be loyal to your boss and yourself. ... it can be done."

Once referred to as senior airman advisor, by the mid-1970s the Air Force officially adopted the term senior enlisted advisor when describing the top chevron representing the enlisted force at wing, numbered air force and major command headquarters levels. To help identify a chief master sergeant who was filling the position of SEA, a two-line name tag adorned the uniform. This changed in 1998 when SEAs became known as command chief master sergeants, and a new chevron authorized for their wear contained a solid star in the middle of the upper blue field of the designation.

In 1973, Maj. Gen. Homer I. Lewis, chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander, Headquarters Air Force Reserve, selected Chief Master Sgt. Robert I. Boyle to become HQ AFRES's first senior enlisted advisor. In 1997, when HQ AFRES became the Air Force's ninth major air command, Chief Master Sgt. Carol Smits exchanged her chief stripes for the new command chief master sergeant chevron. Since March 2007, Chief Master Sgt. Troy J. McIntosh has served as Air Force Reserve Command's 13th command chief master sergeant. Each SEA/command chief has brought to the position his or her own experiences from the many different specialties they held prior to assuming the post. However, consistent with every one of them has been their insistence on improving the enlisted corps by applying effective leadership techniques and motivating others to greater heights of achievement.

The command chief master sergeant advises the commander on matters influencing the health, morale, welfare and effective utilization of more than 58,000 authorized active-duty and Reserve enlisted members within the command and serves as the commander's representative to numerous committees, councils, boards, and military and civilian functions. ★

(Information provided by Gene Vandeventer, staff historian, HQ AFRC.)



CMSgt. James A. Rossi
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES
Aug. 31, 1991 — Sept. 30, 1995
Background: Air Transportation, Aerial Port, Loadmaster
Leadership Statement: "Leaders must listen and provide inspiration. ... must always put their subordinates before themselves while recognizing deserving Airmen."



CMSgt. Carol Smits
Senior Enlisted Advisor, HQ AFRES and Command Chief, HQ AFRC
Oct. 1, 1995 — Dec. 31, 1998
Background: Personnel, Recruiting
Leadership Statement: "I truly believe that you should remember where you came from and never quit."



CMSgt. Billy G. Blackburn
Command Chief, HQ AFRC
Jan. 1, 1999 — Nov. 30, 2000
Background: Supply Technician, Drill Instructor, First Sergeant
Leadership Statement: "Pride ... I'm continually impressed by the pride exhibited by our command's enlisted force."



CMSgt. Cheryl D. Adams
Command Chief, HQ AFRC
Feb. 15, 2001 — Nov. 14, 2004
Background: Medical Services
Leadership Statement: "We're here for a purpose, so live up to it."



CMSgt. Jackson A. Winsett
Command Chief, HQ AFRC
Nov. 15, 2004 — March 7, 2007
Background: Administration, Personnel, First Sergeant
Leadership Statement: "Mission first, people always."



CMSgt. Troy J. McIntosh
Command Chief, HQ AFRC
March 8, 2007 to Present
Background: Security Forces, Personnel Affairs, Personnel
Leadership Statement: "Leadership is the art of listening, empathizing and then taking appropriate actions. Leaders should not be afraid to admit mistakes when they are wrong. We can 'make good' on our mistakes."

JUST MINUTES OUTSIDE THE GATE

Reservist's life changed during Iraq civil affairs mission

By Lt. Col. Teresa M. Riley



Maj. Jose Rivera recuperates at Walter Reed Army Medical Center three weeks after his Humvee was hit by an explosive just outside the gate at forward operating base Falcon, south of Baghdad. With Major Rivera are (left to right) his wife, Audrae; his daughter, Ava; his mother, Margarita Hernandez; and his brother, Augie Antomattei.



Maj. Gen. Del Eulberg, the Air Force Civil Engineer, pins on Major Rivera's Purple Heart medal.

Just as they had done many times before, members of a provincial reconstruction team embedded with the Army's First Infantry Battalion Brigade Combat Team prepared for a routine civil affairs mission outside of forward operating base Falcon in the Rasheed District, south of Baghdad. It was July 5, 2007, and the team members were traveling in a three-Humvee convoy to a point about 30 minutes south of the base.

Each Humvee contained the usual members: a driver, team chief, an interpreter, a gunner and a passenger. The passenger in the lead vehicle was Maj. Jose L. Rivera, an engineer assigned to Air Force Reserve Command's Mission Support Group. He had been in country less than 30 days but had already made this same trip three times.

The convoy cleared the Falcon gate and turned left toward its destination. The Iraqi guard at the checkpoint waived and shouted a greeting as the Americans passed by. Minutes later, an explosively formed projectile penetrated the front passenger window of the lead Humvee, instantly killing the team chief and driver.

"There was no big explosion," Major Rivera said. "Suddenly, everything just slowed down. I didn't know what was going on."

With the driver no longer in control, the Humvee inched forward. Almost immediately, a second explosively formed projectile entered the vehicle through the door next to Major Rivera.

"I did not see the second one hit," he said. "One minute we were driving, and the next minute ... I was trying to understand what was happening."

It didn't take the major long to realize he had been severely injured. His right hand appeared to be missing, and a bone was protruding through his right thigh. His femoral artery was severed, and blood was everywhere.

"I tried to move. I looked at the driver and the team chief, who were slumped in the front seat," Major Rivera said. "The gunner had fallen in with them. I could hear the interpreter screaming."

As hard as he tried, Major Rivera couldn't make sense of his situation. He knew he was badly injured and attempted to retrieve the tourniquet from the lower pocket of his uniform, but his battered body wouldn't cooperate. He heard the men in the other Humvees shouting. He realized his Humvee was on fire. That was the last thing Major Rivera remembered before he lost consciousness.

"I came to as they were pulling me out of the Humvee," he said. "I was in a lot of pain and I was very thirsty — it was very hot that day. Thank God we were traveling with a U.S. Army combat medic who knew what he was doing. He saved my life."

The medic kept Major Rivera conscious during the 30-minute drive to the hospital.

"It was just like the movies. ... I kept wondering if I was going to see my wife and daughter again, and I thought about my unborn son. I kept telling them, 'Save my leg. Save my leg.'"

Not knowing whether Major Rivera was going to make it to the hospital, one of the other men asked him if he wanted to telephone his wife, Audrae. They dialed her number on a cell phone. The only words Major Rivera got a chance to say were, "I'm sorry, I've been hit. I'm sorry," before the line went dead.

"Looking back, that (calling his wife) may not have been the best decision," Major Rivera said. "Understandably, my wife became very upset. It was two in the morning when she got the call. She was seven months pregnant — she is the hero in this whole thing."

It wasn't until the next day that Mrs. Rivera learned her husband was in stable condition.

Major Rivera's recovery from those life-threatening injuries has been nothing short of phenomenal. He credits his recovery to expert medical care and the love of his family.

"All together, I had 13 surgeries, but they saved my leg," he said. "I spent 30 days in the Walter Reed Medical Center and then another 30 days at Fisher House."

The Fisher House program, a private-public partnership, provides "comfort homes," built on the grounds of major military and Veterans Affairs medical centers. According to its Web site, the Fisher House program annually serves more than 10,000 families, who are allowed to stay at no charge.

"I didn't like my daughter to see me all hooked up to wires and everything while I was in the hospital, but she made a game of it," Major Rivera said. "Every day, she took my temperature and checked my heartbeat with her toy doctor's kit. Now she takes care of me by putting Band-Aids where my thumb used to be."

The major said he believes he was given a second chance at life.

"One more second or two and I would have been killed," he said. "There was somebody watching out for me. Now, I appreciate my family even more."

Major Rivera and his family are preparing for his new assignment to Command General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

As for the future, the major said, "My wife and I have decided to stay in the Air Force. I want to make a difference and do my job. That's why I wear this uniform." ★

(Colonel Riley wrote this article while on a detail assignment in the Air Force Reserve Command Directorate of Historical Services at Robins Air Force Base, Ga. Information for this article was gathered as part of the office's effort to produce a larger product titled "The Air Force Reserve's Contribution to the Global War on Terrorism.")

LEARNING TO LEAD

Youngsters sharpen skills, make new friends at teen summit

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin

Deep in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, far from cell phone reception and cable television, a group of 92 teenagers from across the United States gathered at Camp Wahsega, a 4-H camp in Dahlonega, Ga., July 14-18. Although none of the teens knew each other, they all shared a common bond — being the child of a Reservist or Guard member.

The Teen Leadership Summit, a first-of-its-kind event hosted by Air Force Reserve Command, was a challenging week of adventure and education. However, most importantly, the event served as a chance for teens to meet other teens who are facing similar challenges and hardships.

"We were discussing the challenges of having Air Force Reserve families all over the United States and how do we reach out to them and find out what their needs are and how can we meet those needs," said Stacey Young, AFRC's chief of family member programs. "We thought if we could bring a group of key teens from all across the country who are dependents of Air Force Reservists (and Air National Guardsmen), we could talk to them about what issues they're having and how we can meet their needs and also provide them an overview of the programs and services that are already available to them."

Males and females between the ages of 14 and 18 were chosen from across the nation. Some came from as far away as Alaska. Teens were asked to write a short essay describing why they wanted to attend and what they expected to get from the summit.

"The goal was to bring together children of Reserve and Air Guard members who have a common bond to give them an experience they'll never forget in terms of growing as leaders, learning some leadership skills, confidence building and team building," said Brig. Gen. Richard Severson, AFRC's assistant vice commander at the time of the summit. He has since retired.

"These are opportunities that many have not had to date," he said. "To share that experience at a critical time in their lives

when they are starting to make career decisions is phenomenal."

The teens participated in a variety of outdoor activities, including rock climbing and white-water rafting. In addition, they attended classes in herpetology, survival training, stream ecology and leadership.

Representatives from the Boys and Girls Club of America, Military One Source, the American Legion and 4-H briefed the teens on opportunities in their local areas, as well as educational benefits.

"We'd like the teens to take away from this summit what programs and services are out there," Mrs. Young said. "We want them to become advocates for their community and speak out for other military kids who are going through the same challenges."

For many of the teens who attended, the trip down south represented a first, whether it was their first flight or first time in the region. AFRC funded all travel and accommodations for the trip.

"It's really new and exciting. I've never been to the South before. I like it. It's different," said Sarah Elizabeth Horton, a 15-year-old from New Hampshire. "I made new friends from around the country who I can stay in touch with."

Beyond making new friends, the summit allowed teens to build a support network to help one another.

"During leadership class, we talked about how to better deal with our parents' deployments by communicating and talked about counseling other kids going through the same situation," Miss Horton said.

Reserve command is already working on next year's Teen Leadership Summit. Pending final approval, plans are to have one teen summit at a new location for both new teens and those who attended this year's event and another one back at Camp Wahsega for new teens only.

★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the AFRC public affairs)

(Below) Tracy Hunt tries his hand at rock climbing. (Right) Matthew Barrera (left) and Pierce Phillips slide down a mountain stream. (Bottom right) Emily Hoferitza holds a snake during herpetology class. These four teens, along with 88 others from around the country, honed their leadership skills at Air Force Reserve Command's first Teen Leadership Summit this summer.



Getting Better

Get One Now improves rewards for Reservists who refer

The most powerful recommendation is one from a friend. That's the idea behind the Air Force Reserve's Get One Now program. Citizen Airmen telling their friends and family members about skills they've learned, extraordinary experiences they've had and great benefits they're receiving as members of the Air Force Reserve make more of an impression on potential Reservists than any magazine ad, billboard or television commercial.

By serving as a very valuable extension of the formal recruiting force, Reservists are helping to keep the Air Force Reserve a very strong, cohesive organization of people with whom they wish to serve. That's why Get One Now is so important. It provides an opportunity to have a say in who becomes a member of the Air Force Reserve.

To acknowledge Reservists' contribution by referring good people, Get One Now has a new award structure. The awards are divided into four levels, and three of those levels give participants their choice of items. For example, those who earn three awards have their choice between six Level 1 items. Reservists may choose three different items or three of the same one.

Those who earn a fourth award may choose an item from Level 2. The more awards a person earns, the more the value

of the awards increase.

Awards range from satellite radios to laptop computers, and there is no limit to the number of awards a Reservist may earn.

The current award period began Oct. 1 and runs through Sept. 30, 2009, and that is very important. For instance, if you have earned nine awards in that time frame and you earn a 10th award on Oct. 1, 2009, you will not choose from Level 4 but rather from Level 1.

The key to earning awards is to enter referrals into the Get One Now system. Reservists may enter as many people as they want, but a person who is referred must join the Air Force Reserve within 24 months for the Reservist to be eligible for the Get One Now program awards.

Reservists can track the progress of their referrals online at www.get1now.us. This Web site has a new look that makes it easier to enter leads after logging in with the username and password from a Get One Now card. Can't find a card? Call toll free 877-786-2372 and an adviser will supply a password.

Those who do earn an award will be notified by post-card and directed to the Web site.

After logging on, winners will be prompted to go to the awards page and make their selection. Awards will ship approximately 10 business days after selection. ★



The Rules

- All Air Force Reservists, except AFRC recruiters and their family members as well as Reserve liaisons, are eligible to participate.
- There is no limit to the number of referrals that can be submitted, and referrals may be accumulated over time but cannot be older than 24 months to qualify for Get One Now awards.
- A referral must be submitted to Get1Now.us, to 877-786-2372, by online "chat" or by e-mail to qualify for the Get One Now program.
- A referral must result in an enlistment within 24 months of entry into the Get One Now program to qualify for an award.
- Accessions must be achieved during the Air Force Reserve fiscal year, Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, to qualify for the Get One Now awards for that particular year.
- Information provided by Reservists will be used by the Air Force Reserve recruiting offices only. It will never be sold, rented or distributed to any other branch of the military or to a third party. ★

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